

BESS: Oh shush!

DAN: My fourth date wanted me to meet his mother.

BESS: OK, so he was a little too ready for wedlock. That's just part of the search.

DAN: The twenty-third took me to a folk-music-slash-poetry-slam.

BESS: OK. That was unforgivable. But, but, we . . . All right, things haven't been great, uh . . . Maybe you're right. Maybe this personals thing is not the way to go.

DAN: Definitely. It's too spotty. You can't know what you're going to get by reading a list of random attributes. "Barbra Streisand fan, enjoys yoga." He could mean that he heard a Barbra song once or that he plasters life-size posters of her all over his bedroom while saluting her sun. (*Sun salutation yoga posture.*) Besides, these "dates" create false expectations, more pressure, and attract more weirdos. I think sometimes the old-fashioned meet-the-guy-at-the-bar-or-gym is the best way to go.

BESS: Yeah, you're right. You're right. Gym?

DAN: Well bar. The point is that the personals set up a false, uncomfortable situation — a fabrication through words. You need to meet in person.

BESS: Yes. I agree. Better to go much more natural.

DAN: Exactly!

BESS: (*She nods.*) Open the paper. Where's the next singles three-minute dating thing? (*He looks at her.*) That's natural. You talk for three minutes. You meet. You dump. Just like in the bar. You don't read about each other. It's more bang for your buck. Twenty-five dates in seventy-five minutes. You just churn those rejects out. You can't lose!

DAN: Are you insane?! (*Pause.*) Page twenty-seven. There's one at five tonight! (*Gasps.*) I've got to go shower and change. (*He starts to leave in an excited fluster.*)

BESS: Well, call me when you're ready! But do me a favor. Kill the cell phone in the shower. Judy you are not.

## CAREER MATCH

*Dennis, thirties, works as a career counselor. Today he is meeting with a new client, Sally, late twenties. At the beginning of each session, Dennis likes to conduct exercises in order to discover what careers would best suit his client's personality. As the scene opens, a rather sad and angry Sally tries to maintain a positive attitude toward this process.*

### CHARACTERS

Dennis: 30s, a career counselor

Sally: 20s, a client

### SETTING

Dennis's office

### TIME

The present

DENNIS: It's very nice to meet you, Sally.

SALLY: Thank you. You too, uh . . .

DENNIS: Dennis. It's Dennis. Well . . . I always think it's best to just jump right in.

SALLY: Jumping is good. Let's do it.

DENNIS: OK. Now in order to find the perfect career match for you, I need to know a bit about your personality. So, I'd like to do a little exercise with you.

SALLY: OK.

DENNIS: It's very simple. I am going to say a word and I want you to respond with the first thing that pops into your mind.

SALLY: Like word association?

DENNIS: Exactly.

SALLY: OK. Shoot.

DENNIS: Money.

SALLY: None.

DENNIS: Sales.

SALLY: Fifty percent off.  
DENNIS: Coworkers.  
SALLY: Annoying.  
DENNIS: Black.  
SALLY: My life.  
DENNIS: Interesting. Sorrow.  
SALLY: Anger.  
DENNIS: Anger.  
SALLY: Yes.  
DENNIS: Yes?  
SALLY: Yes!  
DENNIS: Oh-kay. Happiness.  
SALLY: Not a chance.  
DENNIS: (*Beat.*) Why don't we stop there. I'd like to ask you a few questions.  
SALLY: Go ahead.  
DENNIS: Do you consider yourself to be a positive person?  
SALLY: Yeah. Absolutely! Just because I'm angry that I'm sad because I'm out of work, and I have no money, and I can't pay my bills doesn't mean I'm not a positive person!  
DENNIS: OK. Good. Just checking. Um, next question. Where do you see yourself in five years?  
SALLY: At the rate we're going, homeless.  
DENNIS: Please understand, Sally, that this is a very important part of the process.  
SALLY: At a hundred bucks an hour, I'm sure it is.  
DENNIS: Think of it as an investment. An investment that comes back to you many times over. Like playing the stock market.  
SALLY: I lost fifteen thousand dollars in the stock market.  
DENNIS: Forget that. More like a boomerang. You, you send it . . . you give . . . you let it *fly* and it comes back to you with added vigor.  
SALLY: No kidding, I got smacked in the face with one of those suckers! Twenty-three stitches and a reoccurring tick. (*She twitches.*)

DENNIS: Forget the boomerang. Bad example. All I'm saying is that this is an initial investment in your financial future.  
SALLY: Then let's get to the financial part.  
DENNIS: Fine. I'm flexible. We can skip ahead. I must warn you though that the less information I gather at the beginning, the harder —  
SALLY: Skip!  
DENNIS: Skipping. OK . . . what type of jobs or industries do you find appealing?  
SALLY: Ones that give me money.  
DENNIS: Good. Good. Anything else?  
SALLY: A job where I don't have to wake up early.  
DENNIS: Right. I remember you said that makes you negative.  
SALLY: Actually it makes me kill people.  
DENNIS: (*Beat.*) Then we won't do that. We'll think second- or third-shift jobs.  
SALLY: But those hours are for crap.  
DENNIS: I'm sorry, I — what hours are you looking for?  
SALLY: Nothing too early. And not too late 'cause I like to watch my must-see TV shows. And not too long 'cause I get tired and bored.  
DENNIS: (*Realizing.*) So you want a part-time job. Great! Now we're making progress.  
SALLY: Yeah. But it has to pay like full time or I'll never afford my bills.  
DENNIS: How about sales? Sometimes they offer good commissions and you can work less hours.  
SALLY: Yeah, but then you have to suck up to people. I don't do sucking up very well.  
DENNIS: I can see that about you.  
SALLY: That's why I don't like bosses.  
DENNIS: No bosses . . . ?  
SALLY: No. Can't deal with them. Always looking over my shoulder. Telling me what to do.  
DENNIS: Well. We're definitely narrowing things down. How about education?

SALLY: Not too bad. Uh, middle of my class.  
DENNIS: No, no. I meant teaching. Shorter hours. Being the boss of your own classroom.  
SALLY: Hey, they even get summers off!  
DENNIS: Well, there you go!  
SALLY: Except that I had a really mean teacher in high school that scared me to death. Now I mostly think teachers are evil.  
DENNIS: I'm sorry to hear that. But if you were the teacher, that would change the situation. You wouldn't be evil to your students.  
SALLY: Are you kidding me? Those brats would drive me up the wall!  
DENNIS: *(Beat.)* Sally? Do you want to work?  
SALLY: Who *wants* to work? Nobody I know. What I want is money. As quickly and easily as I can get it.  
DENNIS: Have you considered robbery? *(He laughs. She stares at him.)* That was a joke.  
SALLY: Well, maybe I should because it seems to be working for *you!* Look, I came here for your help. You're supposed to be an expert at helping people like me find the right job.  
DENNIS: People, yes. People like you, no.  
SALLY: What is that supposed to mean?  
DENNIS: You don't want to do anything, so how am I supposed to help you, huh?!

SALLY: *(Tearfully.)* That is not true!  
DENNIS: Oh no? You won't work nine to five.  
SALLY: No, but —  
DENNIS: You won't work full-time hours.  
SALLY: Yes, but I said —  
DENNIS: But you want full-time pay.  
SALLY: I don't see what's wrong —  
DENNIS: You can't deal with a boss.  
SALLY: Not every job —  
DENNIS: You want money without working!

SALLY: I didn't say without working. I said as quickly and easily as possible.  
DENNIS: OK then. Sales!  
SALLY: Sucking up.  
DENNIS: Customer service.  
SALLY: Bothersome.  
DENNIS: Marketing.  
SALLY: Slavery.  
DENNIS: Telemarketing?  
SALLY: Phone slavery.  
DENNIS: Florist.  
SALLY: Allergies.  
DENNIS: Waitress.  
SALLY: Sucking up again.  
DENNIS: Bank teller.  
SALLY: Too tempting.  
DENNIS: Receptionist.  
SALLY: Dressing up.  
DENNIS: Editor.  
SALLY: Spelling.  
DENNIS: Cook.  
SALLY: Bugs.  
DENNIS: Plumber.  
SALLY: Toilets.  
DENNIS: Finance, computers, inventory?!

SALLY: Numbers, typing, counting!  
DENNIS: I give up! I give up! You are impossible! There is no job out there for you!! All you can see is what's wrong with every single blasted possibility!  
SALLY: Jeez. You're really getting worked up, huh? That's not good for your blood pressure. Maybe this isn't the best job for you. Have you thought about that?  
DENNIS: No, no, I love this job! I love it to pieces! To itsy, bitsy, torn up, ragged little pieces!  
SALLY: That's a lot of pieces. Hey, maybe I can help you. I'm

good at puzzles. I think they're kinda fun. Maybe I can help ya put the pieces back together. Look at the bigger picture.

DENNIS: It's no use.

SALLY: Come on, now. Don't be so negative. Ya got a nice office here. Lots of people to give advice to. You make a killing.

DENNIS: It's just not worth it. And I'm sick of giving advice. Giving, giving, giving.

SALLY: Well maybe you should think that you're telling, not giving. And taking, taking, taking lots of money.

DENNIS: You seem so positive about it. Why don't you take it? Huh? You think my job's so easy — take it!

SALLY: OK. I will. I think I'd like to do this job. Make my own hours, be my own boss, tell people what to do, make lots of money. *(Beat. Realizing.)* Wow, I'm really glad I came to see you. You are very good. To tell you the truth I didn't really think you'd find me anything. But look, ya did. Just goes to show you, the world isn't quite so black. And you were right. Ya gotta make that initial investment. *(Beat.)* So, Dennis, in order to find the perfect career match, I'd like to do a little exercise with you . . .

## BACK TO SCHOOL

*Greg and Tess, late twenties, are married and have been living together for several years. Tess has gotten into the habit of spending large sums of money at Office World and other office supply stores. Things have gotten worse ever since Greg's hours at work have increased. Crisis point hit when they realized she had maxed out several credit cards. Greg has been understanding and has even gone with Tess to Shopaholics Anonymous meetings, but he has now reached his limit. Tess, therefore, has made a promise not to buy anything from Office World without Greg's approval. Tonight, he has found some suspicious new-looking paper products. Tess is just arriving home as the scene begins.*

### CHARACTERS

Greg: 20s, Tess's husband

Tess: 20s, Greg's wife

### SETTING

Greg and Tess's apartment

### TIME

The present

TESS: *(Entering. Surprised by seeing Greg.)* Oh! *(Waves.)* Hi!!

Greg! Wow! I didn't expect you to be — here.

GREG: I got off early. I finished writing my story early.

TESS: Oh. Yeah. *(Looking at her watch.)* It's early. My gosh. It's real early for you.

GREG: Yes! We covered that. Now, where were you?

TESS: What? Well, I was out. I was out. I went out.

GREG: Out? Oh. Where'd you go?

TESS: Food. I was out with dinner. I mean — *for* dinner. Out with Tanya and Joe for dinner. They called me last minute at work.